

Strategic Initiatives

Calgary East Slopes Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy update

The City of Calgary has been working on developing a resource management strategy to support the growth of the city's eastern suburbs. The City's Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) was developed in 2002 to help identify areas for growth and development. Meanwhile, the City has also developed a Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy (SREMS) to support the growth of the city's eastern suburbs.

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Research helps producers get more from wood

Lumber producers in the Peace country gathered late last year to learn how aspen can play a larger role in their production lines. Experts from Forintek Canada Corp. covered aspen market opportunities, manufacturing, drying, and machining at the Aspen Value-Added Workshop in Peace River. Participants heard about the benefits of keeping aspen in its solid form and various techniques that will improve the quality of the wood.

Technology has allowed lower-quality tree species, like aspen, to rise above its natural deficiencies. Aspen, formerly ignored as a weed tree, is most commonly used in the Peace area for making pulp and oriented strand board, rectangular wood strands arranged in cross-oriented layers, similar to plywood.

"Our value-added team assists members in providing better service to their global customers through improved performance in the manufacturing sector. These value-added specialists address industry concerns mainly in the areas of gluing, tooling and finishing," said Stephanie Troughton of Forintek.

Forintek Canada, a non-profit corporation, is Canada's wood products research institute. It supports the forest products industry in maximizing manufacturing processes, extracting higher value products from the available resource and meeting customer's expectations of performance, durability and affordability.

Forintek is a partnership involving more than 185 members including lumber, composites and other value-added wood products manufacturing companies, Natural Resources Canada (Canadian Forest Service) and the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Forintek facilities are located across Canada, including Edmonton. For more information, contact (780) 413-9031 or visit the Forintek Web site at www.forintek.ca

Mark your calendar

The value-added theme is part of the Exploring New Paths Trade Conference, which will examine new global markets. The conference, organized by Forintek Canada Corp. and BC Wood, takes place October 1-4, 2003 at the Wall Sheraton in Downtown Vancouver, BC.



Wood Bits

Alberta's forests cover about 60 per cent of the province's land area.

Alberta's forest sector generates:

- Annual revenues of almost \$8.4 billion.
- Nearly 54,000 jobs for Albertans (24,195 from the primary sector and 29,490 from the secondary sector).
- \$1.6 billion in household income.

New practices and technology allow Alberta's forest product companies to use virtually all the wood harvested, operate more efficiently and generate fewer emissions.

The secondary forest products sector comprises more than 600 small and medium-sized companies operating in a number of diverse markets.

More than 5000 things are made from trees. We use wood products and by-products daily – from paper and lumber to vanilla extract, cereals, baked goods, vitamins, plastics, paints, carpeting, toothpaste, and film.

Sources
Alberta Economic Development
Alberta Forest Products
Industries
Canadian Wood Council

Wood – the natural choice for building

Naturally occurring and renewable, under scrutiny wood excels as the superior building material from an environmental perspective. This according to a study comparing the environmental effects of a 4,620 m² (50,000 ft²) office building constructed mainly with wood, steel or concrete.

The ATHENA™ computer model calculated the overall energy use, air and water pollution, emission of greenhouse gases and solid waste produced, as well as the overall ecological resource use of each material. Wood outperformed the other materials in each of the key research areas.

The wood building used the least energy, had the lowest greenhouse gas emissions and the lowest air pollution index. The wood design also had the lowest solid waste score. There's virtually no waste during the wood manufacturing process since nearly all of the tree can be used. Construction waste is also minimized because panels are usually installed as complete components reducing the amount of on-site cutting.

The ecological resource use index compares the long-term effects of resource extraction. The superior performance of wood on this key measure shows that sustainable forest management practices help ensure minimal environmental disruption.

The ATHENA™ Sustainable Materials Institute (SMI) developed ATHENA™, an environmental assessment tool for the building, design and research professionals. The Athena SMI was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in early 1997 to continue the work started by Forintek Canada Corp. in 1991.

Architects, designers, builders, planners and consumers can use ATHENA™ to look at the life cycle environmental effects of structures and assess the environmental effects of alternative technologies or production processes. For more information, check out the ATHENA™ Sustainable Materials Institute Web site at www.athenaSMI.ca

Integrated approach to business in boreal mixedwood forest

Alberta's first joint forestry management agreement is expected to reduce industrial impact on the environment while reducing log costs for Tolko Industries, a deciduous timber user, and Buchanan Lumber, a coniferous timber user. A second joint forestry management agreement involves Tolko and Footner Forest Products in the High Level area.

Since integrated use and management of multiple species makes sense for ecological and business reasons and has the potential to reduce conflict, observers agree this innovative joint agreement is a step forward in terms of forest management – a step toward the kind of landscape management outlined in the Alberta Forest Legacy policy document. For more information about this joint forestry management agreement, contact Dan Wilkinson, Executive Director, Forest Business and Policy Branch, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, by phone (780) 427-6372 or by E-mail dan.wilkinson@gov.ab.ca

Two programs enable young Albertans to learn about our forests

Who is it for?

The first-year Junior Forest Rangers program is open to all Alberta full-time high school students aged 16-18 as of July 1, 2003. The second-year program is open to all previous crew members who have successfully completed their first season, have graduated from high school, and are over 18 years of age as of July 1, 2003.

Who is it for?

While officially registered wardens are between the ages of six and 18, parents, siblings, friends and relatives are encouraged to take part in club functions.

More Information?

For more information on Junior Forest Rangers or Junior Forest Wardens, check out Alberta Sustainable Resource Development's Forestry Youth Program's Web page at:
www.albertajfw.ca/

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Forest Protection Division offers two unique educational programs through the Forest Fire Information and Community Relations branch.

Junior Forest Rangers is a paid work/education program in which students learn about wildfire operations, environmentally-sound forest management techniques and dozens of career options through a unique combination of work, tours, courses and presentations. The program:

- Fosters an appreciation, awareness and respect for our natural resources with a focus on forestry.
- Does useful conservation work for Forest Protection Division and/or program partners.
- Gives participants an opportunity to develop their career interests in the natural resource field.
- Provides a transition between youth groups, high school Career and Technology Studies modules and post-secondary education programs in resource management.
- Promotes personal development, interpersonal and leadership skills.

The **Junior Forest Warden** program is an opportunity for the entire family to become involved in exciting, new outdoor experiences. It is a physically challenging, active, educational experience that involves discovering the forest environment through activities in forestry, ecology, outdoor skills and leadership. There are Junior Forest Warden clubs situated throughout Alberta. This program:

- Develops an awareness, appreciation and respect for our natural environment, and supports responsible use of this environment.
- Gives participants a hands-on opportunity to develop outdoor skills and knowledge in a family atmosphere.

FireSmart Resources

Living in and around Alberta's forests can be peaceful, but a wildfire can disrupt the tranquility of living away from the city. When structures such as private homes meet or are intermingled with forest and other flammable vegetation this is called the wildland urban interface. Alberta Sustainable Resource Development's FireSmart Program provides Albertans with the information they need to make responsible choices when living in the interface area and that will help them reduce the risk of wildfire affecting their property and the forest. The 16-page FireSmart Home Owners Manual is available on-line at <http://envweb.env.gov.ab.ca/env/forests/fpd/external/firesmart.html>. You can also order the manual by contacting the Information Centre at (780) 422-2079, at env.infocent@gov.ab.ca or at www.gov.ab.ca/srd/info/publist.cfm

For more information about protecting your home and community from wildfire, order a copy of "FireSmart, Protecting Your Community from Wildfire" from Partners in Protection by phone (780) 435-7283, on-line www.partnersinprotection.ab.ca/downloads/index.shtml or from your local Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Forest Protection office.



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Regional Strategies

Northern East Slopes Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy update

The Regional Steering Group continues to meet regularly to complete their draft recommendations for review by the public. Copies of their draft report will be available to support the final round of consultation in March, which will include:

- Distribution of a workbook designed to gather input,
- Public meetings in communities across the region, and
- Meetings with key stakeholder groups.

The Aboriginal Task Force hosted an Aboriginal Forum on November 26 and 27 at the Environmental Training Centre in Hinton. The purpose of the forum was to reconnect with communities, and build levels of awareness and understanding about Integrated Resource Management. The 31 participants included Elders and councilors from Suncillo, Sucker Creek, Grande Cache, Hinton, Alexander, Marlboro, Metis Nation of Alberta/Zone IV, Kapawēno, Surgeon Lake, O'Chiese and Swan River. Members of the Aboriginal Task Team and the Regional Steering Group also participated in the forum.

Representatives of the Regional Steering Group also met with elected officials in December to provide them with updates. On December 2, they briefed the West Central Mayors and Reeves Caucus, and on December 4, they met with the Minister of Environment and MLAs from the region.

Southern Alberta Regional Strategy update

The Southern Alberta Regional Strategy Steering Committee, comprised of key government personnel, have made considerable progress on Phase 1 of the Strategy since the last issue of IRM Connections.

They have completed a draft detailed project plan and timeline, along with a draft awareness and communications plan and have hired Wayne Condon as the Environmental Education & Awareness Specialist, and Vernon Remesz as the Geographic Information Systems Specialist. Both will be based in Lethbridge. A consultant has been hired to compile existing information on public opinion, including the results from other regional and provincial planning initiatives, and polling, and to do an extensive review of media coverage.

Work continues on:

- Module development and data compilation for running ALCES (A Landscape Cumulative Effects Simulator),
- 14 sectoral overviews, being prepared by the departments involved in the Strategy, and
- A review of government policies and business plans that pertain to sustainable development, to help with the scoping of issues and opportunities.

For more information on the NES Strategy, contact:
Andy Lamb, Alberta Environment in Edson
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or check out the NES Strategy Web site:
<http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/regions/nos/strategy.html>

For more information about the Southern Alberta Regional Strategy, contact:
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or check out the SARS Web site:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/env/regions/southern/strategy.html>